

From the 19th till the 21st of February, 2020, the first meeting of the network of socio-economic advisory councils of Latin America and the Caribbean (Consejos Económicos y Sociales de América Latina y el Caribe, CESALC) took place at the Dreams Curaçao Resort, Spa & Casino in Willemstad, hosted by the Social Economic Council (SER) of Curaçao. The central theme of this meeting was 'The Future of Work and the UN 2030 Agenda', which was attended by representatives of economic and social councils and similar institutions from the following countries: Aruba, Curaçao, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Uruguay, Spain and the Netherlands. The International Labour Organization ILO was also represented at the meeting. Soon the presentations and a photo gallery will be published on this website.



CESALC

Red de Consejos
Económicos y Sociales de
América Latina y el Caribe

**Encuentro de la Red de Consejos Económicos
y Sociales de América Latina y el Caribe**

El Futuro del Trabajo y la Agenda 2030 Objetivos y Aspiraciones Compartidas



Sociaal-Economische
Raad Curaçao
www.ser.cw info@ser.cw



Willemstad, Curaçao
19 al 21 de febrero de 2020

EXECUTIVE REPORT

The Network of Economic and Social Councils of Latin America and the Caribbean (RED-CESALC), in cooperation with the Social Economic Council of Curaçao (SER), the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions (AICESIS) and with technical assistance of the International Labour Organization (ILO), organized the 'Meeting of the Network of Economic and Social Councils of Latin America and the Caribbean' in an effort to promote knowledge transfer and the exchange of successful experiences to improve the institutional performance of the Network's Member Councils, entitled 'The Future of Work and Agenda 2030: Shared Objectives and Aspirations'.

The meeting took place in Willemstad, Curaçao, from the 19th till the 21st of February 2020. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions of Aruba, Costa Rica, Curaçao, El Salvador, Spain, Guatemala, Honduras, Uruguay, the Netherlands, the Dominican Republic and representatives of other public and private entities and the academic sector of Curaçao.

The regional meeting was convened to serve as a forum for debate and reflection on the role of the Economic and Social Councils in addressing issues of major importance for the region.

At the opening ceremony of the event, the Prime Minister of Curaçao, Mr. Eugène Rhuggenaath, the Acting President of the SER of Curaçao Mr. John Jacobs, and the Executive Technical Secretary of the Economic and Social Council of Honduras and current President of RED-CESALC, Mr. Jaime Escobar Varela, expressed their satisfaction with the event, underscoring the valuable contribution of social dialogue in the processes of formulating public policies that respond to the challenges of the Future of Work and the Global Agenda 2030.

The first day of the event included presentations and discussions on social protection in a context of change, the linkage between the labour market and social protection, pension systems and reforms of recent years, and the new challenges of social protection, taking as a reference the global challenge of ending poverty, through the implementation of appropriate social protection systems and measures at the national level. Additionally, participants had the opportunity to learn about the evolution of policies and institutions responsible for social protection, particularly in the case of Costa Rica, Uruguay, the Dominican Republic and Spain.

The first day concluded with the keynote address and debate on climate change from the perspective of the challenges and opportunities that the phenomenon entails, based on Sustainable Development Goal (SGD) number 13.

During the second day of the event, the debate and reflection on gender equality in the world of work was generated from the presentation on the ILO initiative on women and others on the subject developed by the representatives of the ILO and the Economic and Social Council of the Netherlands and Spain. Delegates from El Salvador and Uruguay, also briefed members of the CESALC Network on the evolution and prospects of women's labour participation in Latin America and

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the Caribbean. That same day, during the afternoon session, ILO technical specialists addressed the issue of tripartite social dialogue at the national level. Similarly, representatives of the Economic and Social Councils of Guatemala and the Dominican Republic shared their assessments of the contribution of social dialogue to the future of work and the 2030 Agenda. The day ended with a presentation on tripartite social dialogue at the European Union (EU) level.

On its third and final day, the Economic and Social Councils and other similar institutions that lead the Social Dialogue in Latin America and the Caribbean discussed the support of the ILO for the implementation of the Agenda 2030 at the national and regional levels; the contribution of the ESCs of Spain and the Netherlands to Social Cohesion in Latin America and the Caribbean; and assessed the benefits of establishing a strategic alliance between RED-CESALC and the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions (AICESIS), to promote issues of common interest.

Upon intense discussions, RED-CESALC reached the following conclusions:

a) The new challenges of social protection revolve around financing, coverage, social dialogue and the administration of the system, which require enhancement of knowledge of new forms of employment and emerging sectors that affect social protection, such as the green economy, the care economy, the digital economy, the blue economy, teleworking, platform work, zero-hour contracts, self-employed workers and dependents; among others, the need to improve the quality of life of workers and their families.

(b) The overlarge majority of reforms of pension systems around the world point to contractionary measures, such as raising the retirement age, changing the pension calculation formula, streamlining benefits and raising the contribution ceiling until coverage is reduced and IRAs are privatized or introduced.

(c) The lessons from privatized pension systems are that coverage rates have stagnated or declined, pensions have deteriorated, gender and income inequalities have increased and social dialogue has deteriorated.

(d) Gender gaps in key labour market indicators could be reduced if policy decisions are taken that consider gender equality as a central issue, based on factors that pose obstacles to women's employment opportunities and job quality, such as education, unpaid care work, employment penalties linked to maternity, leave and unequal pay, violence and harassment in the world of work, the current technological and digital revolution, the lack of representation of women in trade unions and employers' organizations; among others.

(e) A future of work in which men and women have equal rights and opportunities requires the repeal of laws that discriminate against women and girls before their entry into the labour market.

(f) Tripartism is seen as a dynamic force to enhance efforts to achieve gender equality in the world of work.

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(g) Some conditions to take into account for tripartite social dialogue are: (i) democratic foundations; (ii) respect for fundamental rights and freedoms; (iii) strong, independent and representative social actors; (iv) political will and commitment to dialogue; and, (v) adequate institutional support.

(h) The establishment of social dialogue has important benefits for society, such as: democracy, legitimacy and ownership of public policies, quality in the formulation and implementation of public policies, conflict prevention and labour peace

(i) The region needs the strengthening of tripartite social dialogue at the national level, of its institutions and of the establishment of an effective dialogue at the regional level to promote common agendas.

(j) The ILO has various technical cooperation mechanisms in each country, where the priorities for action are set, and where the starting point for cooperation is established. Compliance with the SDGs depends on the priorities of each country and the involvement of all social actors.

k) The countries of the region require the mobilization of resources and the establishment of strategic alliances in order to face the future of work and make progress in complying with Agenda 2030, with AICESIS, the ILO and the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), among others.

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